861 855 lighter punishments are administered by the mother, who deals with the minor faults and offences of her children. All serious offences and persistent defiance of the mother's authority are reported by her to the father. Very often the mother's threat that she would report the matter to the father is enough to set the recalcitrant children right. In point of fact, many mothers build up the father as a figure to be feared, and in some instances the children actually tremble when they are produced before him for disobedience and other improper conduct. The punishments inflicted by the father on his children are less frequent but more severe. But from the above it should not be surmised that the children's attitude towards the father is only that of fear, for that would obviously be wrong. Fear and respect there certainly are, but not without a definite feeling of confidence and friendship for him. While difficulties are more often referred to and help sought from the mother, the father is not unapproachable, and indeed many fathers teach their children new games, make them small playthings, occasionally take them out for sight-seeing, buy them sweets and other tit-bits, and on demand give them a little money too.

833 868 During later childhood and adolescence the girls draw themselves closer and closer to the mother and occupy themselves mainly with feminine pursuits. The boys continue to maintain close and intimate relations with the mother, but her authority over them gradually diminishes. They learn to coax and cajole her. They know her weaknesses and devise ingenious ways to tease her. She often threatens to bring matters to the notice of the father, but the boys know very well that in all probability the threat will not be carried out. But during this period the father watches the development of his sons with greater interest and when complaints are brought to him the punishment is often exemplary. Traditionally this is believed to be the period when 'boys go tough' and are difficult to manage, and it is during this phase that the father must exercise tact and firmness in keeping them under control. They must keep the right sort of company, and should not be allowed to spend all their time playing and planning mischief. Even if they go to the village school, they should give some time to their traditional caste occupations. By assisting their elders and seeing them at work they should be able to acquire the fundamentals of what in all likelihood is going to be their main vocation

1: Dube E-5 (1951-52) 1955 AW17 Telugu AW17

in life. Indirect education through folktales, parables and songs is now supplemented by direct and conscious instruction by the parents. The mother seeks to train her daughter to be a good wife; she would often say to her, 'The husband's home is very different from the home of your parents. Here you sit down and the meals are served to you by your mother; there even if you work to the point of breaking your limbs you will not have a word of appreciation. And if you do not work, your tormenting mother-in-law and sisters-in-law will not only abuse you, but will also remember your parents in the foulest language.' Through anecdotes and reminiscences, she creates a vivid picture in the daughter's mind of what she is likely to find when she leaves her first home to enter her second and real home. As the time for the girl's marriage approaches, she finds herself attached to the mother all the more. If the father disapproves of any of the ways of the girl seriously, rather than speak to her directly, he would bring the matter to the notice of her mother, through whom he would seek to influence the daughter. Of course on minor matters he can speak to her directly. Similarly, in the case of grown-up boys, when any action more serious than a mere warning, use of strong language or giving of a threat is called for it is the father and not the mother who is supposed to handle them.

When the children enter their youth and adulthood, there are further changes in the pattern of inter-personal relationships between the parents and children. By this time the girls are married off and leave the parental home to take their place as wives in the homes of their respective husbands. For three or four years they maintain a somewhat intimate and regular contact with their parental home, and their people too are interested in their adjustment and welfare in the new surroundings. Afterwards, however, the girl gets increasingly absorbed in the affairs of her own home, and the memories of childhood friends, as well as those of her parental home, gradually recede into the background. In later years, on ceremonial occasions she returns to her parental home more or less a stranger. Not that the parents are totally unconcerned about the welfare of their daughter, or that the girl has altogether forgotten them, but the distance that separates them (in time and space) gradually takes away much of the glow and warmth of the feelings which they have for one another. On the other hand, the boys also marry and their wives come home to

1: Dube E-5 (1951-52) 1955 AW17 Telugu AW17

shows signs of digesting these well, siblings and other members of the family begin giving bits of food to pacify the baby when it starts crying. During this stage people love to handle the child, and there is very considerable fondling and play. No effort is made to establish sphincter control in the child at this point. Every possible help is given to the child to learn to stand and walk. While people take great delight in imitating the sounds made by the child, efforts are also made to teach him to talk. Words for grandfather, grandmother, father, mother, uncles and aunts, brothers and sisters are generally the first to be taught. In a state of mental agitation and worry the mother may occasionally spank the child; but this is definitely disapproved and when detected the mother is always reproached by the elders for doing so.

With some modifications this continues even during the early childhood, up to the age of about three. When the child learns to walk it is carried about less by the elders. Now and then it may be left to play by itself in the backyard or in the lane in front of the house. Help in its learning processes continues to be given, and elders indulge in considerable fondling of the child. Weaning is not attempted unless necessitated by the mother's pregnancy or by the 'drying up of her breasts'. Attempts at toilet training are made at this stage. When the child wakes up in the morning the mother seats it on the hollow made by joining her feet and keeps on making a hissing sound which is believed to induce a child to ease itself. Now and then the child is taken to a corner, the cloth covering its genital organs is removed, and the hissing sound is made to make it urinate. If the child wets or soils its clothes at this stage the mother or a sibling will say, '*Chhi*, you are dirty'. But this is done with a smile and there is hardly any reproach in the remark.

When boys are seen manipulating their organs the elders smile and playfully remove their hands from them. Boys invariably start doing so again, and are not admonished. This amuses rather than irritates the older members of the family. While the sex experience of the children is confined wholly to their manipulation of genital organs, their sex knowledge is considerably wider. Sharing the same room with their parents, they have frequent opportunities of watching them engaged in the coital act. Even at the age of three the vocabulary of several children includes the words for penis, vagina and copulation.